

# Gift recognizes loving care that restored a boy's body and a family's hope

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**Will Wolbrecht, age 6, recuperating with his pal, Bella, at his side.**

**G**ena Wolbrecht's memory of the Sunday afternoon her son Will was seriously injured is sharp, despite the fear and panic she felt at the time.

Gena recalls her husband Ric rushing into the house from the backyard, carrying Will and saying he thought their son's leg was broken. She remembers Will's face, brave and solemn, with no tears. When Ric removed Will's pants, she saw the enormous swelling under the skin. As Ric put his hands under the boy's thigh, Gena remembers the leg "shook like jelly," as if the bone had disappeared.

And Gena recalls the words she heard the next morning, as a team of Campbell Clinic surgeons and assistants prepared to repair the spiral fracture of the femur in Will's left leg.

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## CARE FROM THE A-TEAM

During the year since Will's accident in March 2007, the Wolbrechts have come to think of all the Campbell Clinic staff involved in Will's care as the A-Team.

In a note accompanying the donation the Wolbrecht family made to The Campbell Foundation in gratitude for the care given Will, Gena Wolbrecht wrote the following words of praise:

"Dr. Terry Canale and physical therapist Lisa Jain took such good care of our six-year-old son. Dr. Canale put his body back together, showed him love, and gave us hope. Lisa made healing and therapy fun and an activity Will looked forward to while making him stronger in the process. We will never forget what they and the staff at Campbell's has done for us."

Knowing that Will was in the hands of some of the world's best doctors, at one of the best orthopaedic clinics anywhere, was such a comfort, according to Gena. "At a time when we were worried about so much, we never worried about Will's medical team. We completely trusted Campbell Clinic," she said.

## NEVER ANY DOUBT

When Will Wolbrecht fell from the double-seated glider he was standing on in the backyard of his Germantown home, the femur in his left leg splintered as it broke. When x-rays at a hospital emergency room revealed the seriousness of the injury, Ric Wolbrecht knew he wanted Campbell Clinic surgeons on his son's case.

"I have a history with Campbell Clinic, beginning when I played football at Christian Brothers High School," said Ric, an investment broker with Morgan Keegan. "I've had repeated surgeries to my ankle, and elbow surgery too. There was never any doubt for me that we wanted someone from Campbell Clinic taking care of Will."

Dr. Terry Canale, a pediatric orthopaedic surgeon, directed Will's case. In the initial surgery, he and Dr. James Beaty worked to implant titanium rods on both sides of Will's femur. However, one side of the splintered bone chipped each time surgeons attempted to attach the rod. Their best recourse was to allow the bone on that side to grow back on its own.

## A CHALLENGING RECOVERY

Will returned home in a full body cast. Gena, West Tennessee financial sales director with Regions Bank, homeschooled Will using curriculum from St. Louis School, where Will had been attending kindergarten. Jeni Grace, Will's younger sister, helped Gena and Ric keep Will comfortable and entertained.

The weight of Will's body cast, combined with his weight, made moving him difficult. Friends drove Jeni

Grace to school. "We pretty much stayed home for three months, except visits to the doctor's office," Gena said. "It was a challenge."

The skill of his medical team, combined with Will and his family's determination to follow the treatment plan prescribed for him, led to a successful recovery.

Will attended his kindergarten graduation ceremonies at St. Louis School in a reclining wheelchair. Near the end of May, after a third surgery on Will's leg, doctors replaced the full body cast with a "bikini" cast. When that cast was removed at the end of June, Will used a walker for a month.

Throughout the summer, physical therapist Lisa Jain helped Will regain strength and muscle tone. "He had to re-learn how to hop, skip, walk and run all over again," Gena said. "Our goal all summer was to have him strong enough to start first grade with his friends."

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—GENA WOLBRECHT



Dr. S. Terry Canale

## "SO FAR, THINGS LOOK GOOD"

Since returning to school in August as a first grader, Will has been able to participate fully in school life. He's a good student, excelling at spelling. His favorite class is gym.

"Dr. Canale is monitoring the growth in Will's left leg," Gena said. "We hope the left leg will catch up and be the same length as the right one, so Will won't walk with a limp. So far, things look good."

This spring, Will plans to play on one of the school's basketball teams. The Wolbrechts are determined to let Will participate in the activities that interest him, just as he would have before the accident.

"We don't want to think about another broken bone," Ric said, "but if it happens, it happens. We know we always have Campbell Clinic to call if we need them again."